

ACT I] LADY WINDERMERE'S
FAN

301

Enter Lord Windermere C.

Lord Windermere. Weil, dear, has the fan been sent
home yet?
[*Going R C. Sees book.*] Margaret, you have cut
open my
bank book. You have no right to do such a
thing!

Lady Windermere. You think it wrong that you are
found out,
don't you?

Lord Windermere. I think it wrong that a wife
should spy on
her husband.

Lady Windermere. I did not spy on you. I never
knew of this
woman's existence till half an hour ago. Some
one who
pitied me was kind enough to tell me what
every one in
London knows already—your daily visits to
Curzon Street,
your mad infatuation, the monstrous sums of
money you
squander on this infamous woman! [*Crossing*
L.]

Lord Windermere. Margaret! don't talk like that
of Mrs.
Erlynne; you don't know how unjust it is!

Lady Windermere. [*Turning to him.*] You are very
jealous of
Mrs. Erlynne's honour. I wish you had been
as jealous
of mine.

Lord Windermere. Your honour is untouched,
Margaret. You
don't think for a moment that [*Puts book*
back into desk.]

Lady Windermere. I think that you spend your
money strangely.
That is all. Oh, don't imagine I mind about
the money.
As far as I am concerned, you may squander
everything we
have. But what I do mind is that you who have
loved me,
you who have taught me to love you, should
pass from the
love that is given to the love that is bought.
Oh, it's
horrible! [*Sits on sofa.*] And it is I who feel
degraded! I
don't feel anything. I feel stained, utterly
stained. You
can't realize how hideous the last six months
seems to me
now—every kiss you have given me is tainted in
my memory.

Lord Windermere. [*Crossing to Her*] Don't say that,
Margaret.
I never loved any one in the whole world but
you.

Lady Windermere. [*Rises.*] Who is this woman,
then? Why do
you take a house for her?

Lord Windermere. I did not take a house for her.

Lady Windermere. You gave her the money to do
it, which, is
the same thing.

Lord Windermere. Margaret, as far as I
have known Mrs.
Erlynne---

Lady Windermere. Is there a Mr. Erlynne—or is
he a myth?

Lord Windermere. Her husband died many years
ago. She is
alone in the world.